



# Hedge Maze Area Rug

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## TOOLS:

- [Carpet shears \(1\)](#)
- [Electric clippers \(1\)](#)
- [Measuring tape \(1\)](#)
- [X-Acto knife \(1\)](#)

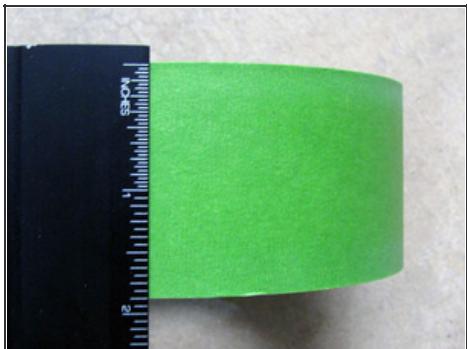
## PARTS:

- [Carpet \(1\)](#)
- [Masking tape \(1 roll\)](#)

## SUMMARY

I saw an expensive designer "labyrinth" carpet like this in a catalog years ago, and wondered at the time if I could recreate the effect on the cheap by taking electric hair clippers to a piece of ordinary deep pile carpet. Long story short: It works!

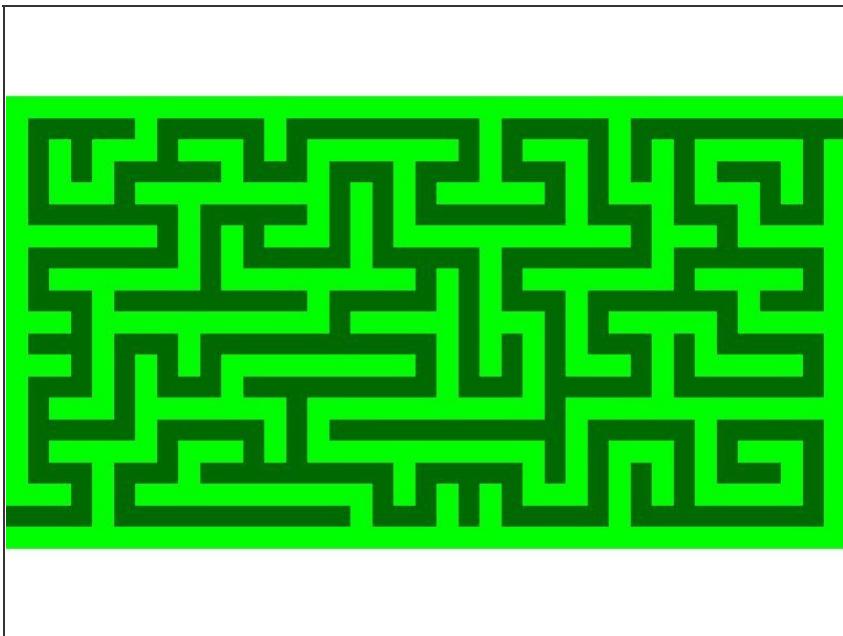
## Step 1 — Measure, measure, measure



- Record the following dimensions:
  - Length and width of your carpet. (Mine was 74x71".)
  - Length and width of the area you want the rug to fill. (Mine was 74x41".)
  - Width of your shaver head. (Mine was 1.75".)
  - Width of your masking tape. (Mine was 1.875".)
- Write it all down, someplace. A spreadsheet will be handy for doing the math in the next step.



## Step 2 — Design your maze



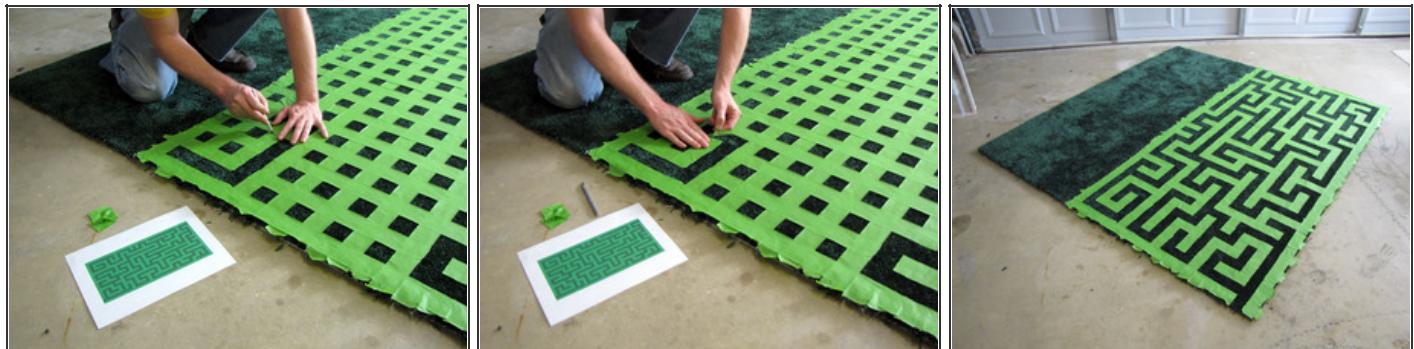
- Check that your piece of carpet is big enough to make the rug you want.
- Check that your tape is at least as wide as the head of your clipper. They don't have to be exactly the same, but should be within 1/4" of each other.
- Divide the length and width of the area you want to cover by the width of your tape and round to the nearest odd integer. In my case:
  - $X = 74"/1.875" = 39.47$  (39)
  - $Y = 41" / 1.875" = 21.87$  (21)
- Design a maze on a square grid that is XxY units (39x21, in my case). You can design it by hand on paper or in software, or you can generate it procedurally. I used the program [Daedalus](#) to generate mine.

## Step 3 — Lay out cutting grid



- A smooth floor will make cleanup much, much easier. Pick the best corner of your carpet to start from.
- Adhere a strip of tape all the way along one edge of the carpet. If one side of your design is longer than the other, lay out the longer dimension first.
- Add a small "spacer" strip of tape at each end of the long strip to gauge the spacing for the next strip.
- Repeat the process, adding full strips and spacers, until the total number of rows (full strips and spacers both included) equals the number of units in your maze's shorter dimension. The first and last rows should be full strips.
- Repeat the process, as above, but along the other dimension, starting from the same corner, adding full tape-strips and -spacers until you have a complete grid covering the full area of your design.

## Step 4 — Cut out squares to form maze



- Using a new, sharp hobby knife blade, cut out individual squares from the grid to form the corridors in your maze plan.
- Peel up the cut-out squares with your fingers and discard them.
- If your plan has walls on all four sides, and no wall or corridor is wider than one unit anywhere, you should be able to lay it out just by cutting single squares from this grid. Otherwise, you may have to add short sections of tape, here and there, to form "off grid" walls.



## Step 5 — Rough trimming



- Plug in your electric clippers and start trimming away carpet pile from the corridor areas.
- You may want to practice the technique on a piece of scrap carpet first. It's not hard to do, but here are some pointers:
  - Oil your clipper blades frequently.
  - Take a break every now and again to let the clippers cool off.
  - No downward pressure is required besides the clipper's own weight.
  - Watch the length of the carpet piles coming off in front of the blade to monitor the depth of the cut.
- I tried using guide combs with my clippers to maintain a constant cut depth, but found them to be more trouble than they were worth. I'm pleased with my "free-hand" results, but you may want to experiment.



## Step 6 — Cut to shape



- Using the edge of the tape as a guide, cut the outside perimeter of the rug to shape using carpet shears or a utility knife.
- My plan was designed to use the entire width of the piece of carpet I had purchased, so I only had to make one cut, as shown. Depending on your plan, you may have to make two perimeter cuts.



## Step 7 — Final touches



- Remove the tape. Just grab it and pull.
- Inspect the corridors for shallow areas, bumps, or other imperfections. Go back and touch them up with the clippers if necessary.
- Clean up the trimmings. I picked the rug up and shook it out, swept up all the loose trimmings with a broom, and finished up by giving the rug a thorough vacuuming.

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I fully expected the actual shaving would be the tedious part. In fact, the shaving process was pretty engrossing work and the time passed quickly. The tedious part was laying out the grid to start. I toyed with the idea of mounting a video projector on the ceiling to project the maze pattern on the carpet directly, but the tape-grid method won out for simplicity and accessibility.

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